

WHAT DOES THE CLIENT DESCRIBE AS THE MAIN PROBLEM(S)? *(Use the client's own words.)*

WHAT DOES THE CLIENT WANT FROM THERAPY/COACHING/COUNSELLING?

Emotional Goals (How you want to *feel* differently): What thoughts, images, feelings, emotions, sensations, memories, urges, would they like to avoid, reduce or get rid of? *(Note: To convert emotional goals to behavioral goals, we may say: "So part of our work here is learning new skills to handle these difficult thoughts and feelings more effectively, so they have less impact and influence over you.")*

Behavioral Goals (What you want to *do* differently): What would the client like to stop/start; do more/less? How would they like to treat themselves, others, the world around them, differently? What activities or skills would they like to do or develop? What people, places, situations, activities, challenges, would they like to approach rather than avoid? What relationships do they want to improve?

Outcome Goals (What you want to *have, get or achieve*): What outcomes would the client like to achieve - e.g. get a job, find a partner, buy a house, recover from an illness, heal an injury, have a child, make new friends, build a better relationship? *(To convert outcome goals to behavioral goals: "So part of our work here is to explore what you can start doing differently, to increase your chances of achieving these goals.")*

RELEVANT PAST HISTORY

Was there any trauma, neglect, attachment issue, or other significant childhood problem, directly relevant to current issues? What major life events—traumatic, disruptive, or stressful— are factors in the current presentation?

EXTERNAL, PHYSICAL, BIOLOGICAL, SOCIAL BARRIERS TO QUALITY OF LIFE

Are there external, physical, social or biological barriers to a rich and full life? E.g. legal, medical, social, financial, domestic problems? Any systemic problems like prejudice, discrimination, poverty? Any occupational problems, e.g. exposure to trauma or toxins? Any biological factors, e.g. injury, disease, starvation, neurological issues, drug side-effects?

REEXPERIENCING TRAUMA and/or ABNORMAL AROUSAL

If relevant: How is the client reexperiencing traumatic events (e.g. flashbacks, nightmares)? Are there symptoms of extreme hyperarousal or hypoarousal? Dissociation? Emotional numbness?

UNWORKABLE ACTION

What is the client doing that makes life worse, worsens problems, inhibits growth, prevents healthy solutions, impairs health, damages relationships etc? Are there difficulties planning, initiating, or completing tasks? What IMPORTANT people, places, events, activities, and challenges is the client avoiding or escaping (e.g. withdrawing from, quitting, procrastinating, giving up on, or staying away from)?

EXPERIENTIAL AVOIDANCE: What private experiences is the client trying to avoid, reduce or get rid of? May include: thoughts, images, memories, emotions, feelings, sensations, urges, cravings, withdrawal symptoms.

FUSION: (Include examples of specific thoughts, as well as cognitive processes such as worrying or ruminating.)
PAST & FUTURE: (rumination, worrying, fantasizing, blaming, predicting the worst, reliving old hurts, idealizing the past or the future, flashbacks, 'if only ...', why did it happen?, catastrophizing, resentment, regrets etc.)

SELF-DESCRIPTION: (self-judgments, self-limiting ideas about 'who I am' or 'what I can and can't do', self-labels)

REASONS: (reasons the client gives for why they can't, won't or shouldn't change, or why their life can't be improved)

RULES: (about how myself, others, life should be: look for key words such as: 'should', 'have to', 'must', 'ought', 'right', 'wrong', 'always', 'never', 'can't because', 'won't until', 'shouldn't unless' -etc.)

JUDGMENTS: (mostly these will be negative, but sometimes positive; may be about anyone or anything: other people, oneself, one's job, one's body, one's thoughts and feelings, the past, the future, or even life itself)

OTHER - INCLUDING NARRATIVES, SCHEMAS & CORE BELIEFS:

INFLEXIBLE CONTACT WITH THE PRESENT MOMENT: Consider the "3 Ds" - Distractibility; Disengagement; Disconnection from thoughts & feelings. Any difficulties sustaining or shifting attention, or problematic hyperfocus?

REMOTENESS FROM VALUES:

What life domains and what people does the client care about: e.g. work, study, health, parenting, marriage or other intimate relationship, friends, family, spirituality, community, environment? Is the client in touch with their values in at least some of these domains? If yes, which values, in which domains?

What values does the client seem to have lost touch with, or be disconnected from? What values seem to be buried beneath fusion with rigid rules? What values does the client seem to be avoiding because they are too painful to connect with?

SKILLS DEFICITS:

What important skills does the client either lack or fail to apply effectively - e.g. problem-solving, goal-setting, action-planning, self-soothing, assertiveness, communication, executive function?

CLIENT RESOURCES

STRENGTHS & SKILLS: What useful strengths, skills and other personal resources does the client have? Also consider external resources; for example, who can they ask for help and support?

VALUES-CONGRUENT GOALS & ACTIVITIES:

What values-congruent goals and activities does the client: a) already have; and b) want to pursue?

MY PERSONAL BARRIERS: What difficult thoughts and feelings show up for me, regarding this client? How can I apply ACT to myself to help with this? (*Note: Complete this section on a sheet that **doesn't** go into the client's notes.*)

BRAINSTORM: What core ACT processes may help? What questions, exercises, worksheets, metaphors, tools, techniques and strategies might be useful? What skills-training may be required? What values-based problem-solving and action-planning is required to address external/physical/ biological barriers?